

PROSPECTS OF MANKIND

SEASON 2, EPISODE 10, AMERICA'S PROPAGANDA CAPABILITIES

May 26, 1951

Description. In the final episode of the season, ER and her guests, Edward R. Murrow, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Chanchal Sarkar, and Roscoe Drummond, discuss American propaganda. Recorded at Brandeis University May 26, 1961.

Participants: ER, Edward R. Murrow, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Chanchal Sarkar, Roscoe Drummond,

[Edward R. Murrow:] This is a matter that has to do not only with men's minds but with their bellies. It has to do with calories and it has a great deal to do with dignity.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] There is no inherent magic in propaganda. No amount of propaganda can persuade the rest that we are different from what we are. Effective propaganda derives not from what we say but from what we are and what we do.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] No major information policy has any hope of succeeding if it can't attract self-respecting and talented local people. And no amount of organization or skill in technical communication can replace personal contact.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Surely, the best possible foreign policy needs continuous exposition around the world. Good policy can be badly hurt by bad information. But good information can never come from bad policy.

[Theme Music 1:10]

[Title Sequence:] [Text overlaid *Prospects of Mankind* logo] National Educational Television/ Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt/ *Prospects of Mankind*

[Bob Jones:] Recorded on the campus of Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, National Educational Television presents the WGBH-TV production, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt *Prospects of Mankind*.

The subject for discussion is America's ability to meet the propaganda challenge. Here are Mrs. Roosevelt's guests: Edward R. Murrow is the director of the United States Information Agency. He was the Columbia Broadcasting System's leading radio and television broadcaster for twenty-five years. In the past few months, he has been conspicuously absent from the airwaves. This program marks his first television appearance since becoming director of the United States Information Agency. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. is President Kennedy's special assistant. His first overseas assignment in his new post was a mission to key government officials of several South American countries. He is a Pulitzer prize-winning historian and former Harvard professor. Chanchal Sarkar is the assistant editor of "The Statesman," India's influential English language daily. He is currently a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University. He is from a part of the world whose friendship and understanding who are of prime

importance to U.S. policy. Roscoe Drummond, Washington columnist for the New York Herald-Tribune Syndicate will assist Mrs. Roosevelt in moderating today's discussion. Now here is Mrs. Roosevelt.

[Audience applause]

[ER:] I welcome you all here today. Mr. Murrow, I would like to welcome you back to your own medium, and to say how pleased I am that this will be your first television appearance since becoming a government official. After the high hopes felt around the world for the Kennedy administration, how much has American prestige suffered in recent weeks?

[Edward R. Murrow:] Well, Mrs. Roosevelt, I would like to say at the outset that it's a great pleasure to bask in the sunshine of your compliments anywhere, at any time. It's a privilege to be here. I think you would agree that prestige is a very inexact word. But it is quite true that things have not been very tranquil in Washington in recent weeks. With Cuba, with Laos, with Alabama, other racial incidents. These things, however, have happened. We have reported them. We have done our best, particularly in connection with the incidents in the South, to indicate the speed and effectiveness with which the federal government has moved. If we use prestige in terms of the general image, which is a most unfortunate word, it seems to me, I prefer to speak of ideals rather than images because it seems to me that an image is something into which you fit and an ideal is something to which you aspire. But I think we have not gained ground in that area in the last few months.

[ER:] Do you feel that we have really lost a great deal? Or that we, that people are beginning to understand the difficulties, the fact that we are striving to achieve an ideal, which is part of our difficulty at present?

[Edward R. Murrow:] I think we have not lost anything that cannot be regained. I think we have been required to go again to the premise that democracy's business is always unfinished business, that we have problems, that they are not easy to resolve, but the effort is being made.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Mr. Murrow, might I ask you this question: Though prestige is an inexact word and surely an inexact science, it was a word and was an issue in the minds of many people a few months ago. If prestige was significant then, and the attempts to measure it, why has the USIA discontinued the polls on which some people felt they, in part, won an election?

[Edward R. Murrow:] Mr. Drummond, I anticipated that you would ask that question.

[Roscoe Drummond:] I didn't want to disappoint you. [ER, audience, and guests laugh]

[Edward R. Murrow:] I'm delighted to have a chance to express my gratitude to you [laughter]. It is quite true that we have abandoned the so-called prestige polls. Some people called them barometer polls. We did not wish to have this government appear in the light of holding its finger to the pulse of foreign countries and determining policy on that basis. We are going to continue to use polling techniques, but we have no interest whatever in spending the taxpayer's money to run a sort of rating services as to the relative popularity of Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Khrushchev. This proves nothing. We will use polling techniques in an effort to discover what is troubling people in foreign countries: their areas of misapprehension, of curiosity. If I can say it in the vernacular, "what's bugging 'em." So that we then in radio, television, and print can attempt to direct the media toward those areas of concern or misapprehension.

[Roscoe Drummond:] May I just raise one further point there? Undoubtedly, very few people have had the opportunity to read the detail and intimate substance of the past prestige polls. But is it really accurate

to say that the previous polls were directed at producing a barometer of personal popularity between Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Khrushchev?

[Edward R. Murrow:] They were not directed exclusively at that. But nevertheless, this was the impression created, and this was the reason--one of the reasons that we abandoned them. Because in addition to doing the polling that I indicated earlier, we will send our people out to talk with newspaper editors, with members of parliament, and so forth, and then try to put this all together so that we get a more complete picture than we have had before.

[ER:] Then, in other words, what you are saying is that we will try to give the type of information which really is in--is needed or wanted by the people of an area, and we will not be exclusively interested in what they think about us. We will be much more interested in providing them with as accurate a picture as we can of the things in which they are interested in our country? Is that it?

[Edward R. Murrow:] Mrs. Roosevelt, as has happened so often before, you said it better than I did and in less time. That is precisely it [laughter]. Because what we are trying to do is turn the Washington end of the USIA into a service agency which will be responsive to the requirements and the demands of our posts abroad.

[ER:] That seems to be a very much better idea than I had had in regard to the polls before. What do you think, Mr. Schlesinger, about the prestige in the world at present and of past--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] I've never been -- I've never been in favor of forming foreign policy on the basis of market research. I think that what we must do in the realm of foreign policy is to use our best political and economic judgments, strategic judgments, as to the character of the problem, and act in terms of the best interests of our--of our own country, and the best interests of peace, and do so without regard to whether that produces temporary popularity or unpopularity.

[ER:] Would that also be your opinion?

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Well, I agree with Mr. Murrow, I think, that you do need to have some system of assessment. But I think the ones that uh we read, in I think October and November, the things in the newspapers, I think, were carried on very ham-handedly, and they're not the kind of prestige polls, which are likely to give any useful information at all. But the new things which you are saying that you are still carrying on, an assessment system, I think, is very necessary. As for prestige itself, um it's always easy for people like myself outside of this country to see the negative aspect of when prestige goes down, as in the case of Cuba, or - or Alabama. But I would say that all of us now, with the summit meeting coming up, uh I think the whole world is rather shaken by the Cuban uh Cuban episode, and there was a lot of doubt about President Kennedy's capacity and caliber. It was so different from what we expected. And so I think although as you say that there's nothing which can't be made up, I think we are waiting, containing ourselves, you know, restrainedly, to see what exactly comes--comes along.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] What matters obviously is the long haul on these things. I have no doubt that in the first weeks of the new administration, as always happens, hopes and expectations were built up to an impossible length. I also have no doubt that in the last weeks they've fallen far below any kind of sober evaluation of what--what is likely to happen. But in the longer run, as the policy of a new government begins to display itself in connection with one concrete problem after another, you then have the basis, and the world will have the basis for some sober judgment.

[ER:] Well, you know, Mr. Schlesinger, something interests me always. People are always asking for a policy for a country. They ask India for India's policy and they don't like it if India stays neutral in this

certain thing or whatnot. But actually, is it a possible thing to have a completely cut and dried policy, because isn't policy something that has to be shaped? I don't mean that you could not have overall objectives if you sat down and carefully thought out what you wanted to do in the distant future. But don't you have to meet things as they come along, and isn't policy a constantly flexible uh machinery. I mean, isn't it something you creates as you go along?

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Well, it obviously must be unless you assume that history is going to come to a stop. You're bound to have a series of changing situations. The one constant in history is change, and so long as you have change, and particularly so long as the velocity of history has reached its present point, you're going to be presented with a whole series of different situations. Your objectives, as you say, will remain, constant, but the policies and programs by which you seek to meet these objectives obviously must not be frozen into rigidity, but they must be adapted for the new, any new developments in the actual outside situation.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Mrs. Roosevelt, you remarked earlier that what-what we do in this country and that what other people do in their countries perhaps contributes more than anything else to the substance of how people view us. Uh you're engaged in an enterprise within the United States that may have a considerable impact around the world. Namely, uh you are serving on a committee raising funds to buy tractors to obtain the freedom of the Cuban invasion prisoners. How do you feel that that project, as a spontaneous action, if it is, of the American people, will affect the United States around the world?

[ER:] Well, I think it appeals to the American people primarily from a humanitarian standpoint, and they have risen to the opportunity to do something humanitarian to save the lives of a certain number of men who thought they were doing something that they believed in that they thought was right. And I think in a way, some of us had a feeling of responsibility for the lives of these people. And therefore, I-I believe that this was started, and it was not started by my committee, you know, by the committee that Mr. Reuther and Dr. Eisenhower and I serve on. There were springing up in this country a number of small groups that on their own were trying, the minute that they heard Mr. Castro's speech, to raise some money to buy tractors. And I have a feeling that the world usually knows -- there's some sort of feeling when people do things honestly from a sense of wanting to help. I think in this case, throughout the country, judging by the letters that have come in to me, there is a great desire to have these men freed and safe, but also to help the Cuban farmer. You will remember that Mr. Castro, President Castro, said that he wanted tractors to raise the amount of food that could be grown and the standard of living of the farmer. And I think that appealed to an enormous number of people in this country who felt they could make a gesture of friendliness where they'd lost friends and where they'd felt a traditional tie almost with the people in Cuba. And I-I think this -- I don't know -- I think it will nevertheless be understood in many parts of the world that this was a gesture on the part of the American people, which had humanitarian and friendly feelings behind it, for the people.

[Roscoe Drummond:] May I raise an aspect of it, which I know, has produced some anxiety in the minds of a number of people, including various members of Congress, various [ER: I know that.] influential and respected members: the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and others. And that is, that they feel--if I correctly describe their view--that it's really impossible to disassociate the United States government from this project, from providing -- because the government has given permission for it, because it has to provide the uh export licenses, because it is proposing tax deductions on the gifts, which means the government would thereby be paying part of the tractors, and that if you cannot disassociate the government from it, doesn't this become a matter of yielding to some pretty crude, rough, and rude blackmail?

[ER:] Well, I think you have to remember, first of all, that Mr. Castro did not say that this--was very careful to lay down this as one of the things--that this was not men for machines but in payment of

damage that he was asking for. That we have to remember. That's his version. However, you don't get the men unless you give the machines. Uh now I wonder whether really even the gentlemen in Congress, if they stopped to think, are really ashamed to have their government take part in a humanitarian, friendly gesture. I don't think they think of it in that way. Are we so weak that we are afraid to seem to do something that is done out of humanitarian and kindly motives? If we were really trying to humble our-- give in to President Castro or do something that was unworthy in some way, I think I would feel ashamed to do it. But I'm not in the least ashamed to do something which is good to do and which will help people, and I just don't think that our-our representatives in Congress have really thought through that even to feel for a minute that your country humiliates itself when it does something good is-is a much weaker stand to take then if you are proud of having your government take its share in a good thing.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] It seems to me that clearly that one of the things a great nation confident in its strength can do is precisely something like this. I was also rather struck by a- by a statement in a sentence in Senator [Styles] Bridges speech attacking this in which he said that he thought this was a very bad idea, and then he said, of course, if it were Americans involved, it would be different. It seems to me that to rest our case on this kind of distinction, these men are not Americans, they are brave men, their freedom is something in which we are interested, as we are interested in the freedom of people everywhere. And for Senator Bridges to say that it would be all right to do this if it were Americans involved but not to do it if it were Cubans involved seems to me to suggest the quality of argument being used against the case--

[Roscoe Drummond:] I think it would be only fair to point out that that was not a distinction which Senator Fulbright made when he expressed his opposition to the idea, so that while some have based their argument on that premise, there are others who have not based their--

[ER:] I think also that we ought to say that nobody has made an offer of this kind before. Uh perhaps if some other government would offer of this kind before. Perhaps if some other government would offer to free Americans for payment, we might do the same thing, but this is the first time the head of a state has offered to do this, except in the war when Hitler offered to make an exchange and that was impossible because the war was on, and it was war materiel--

[some crosstalk]

[Roscoe Drummond:] Does anyone think--does anyone think that it Mr. Khrushchev offered to free Powers for a couple of bulldozers or an airplane that we would respond to it?

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] That's quite a different situation because precisely the fact that this is -- Cuba is a country so small, that it creates quite a different problem and a different opportunity. I would think that the test of this as to whether this, as some people fear, exposes the United States to -- as a weak country abroad, lies in the reactions we've had abroad. Particularly, the reactions of Latin America. The reactions--

[Roscoe Drummond:] What have those reaction--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] The reactions of Latin America have been one of shock at Dr. Castro's proposal and one of support of the initiative of Mrs. Roosevelt's committee. And already, similar committees are springing up over Latin America in an effort to raise money and to, to provide tractors, and more than that they are, these committees are coming out in groups, which--like student groups, which in the past have not been notably friendly to the United States. I think Mr. Murrow has a lot of information on this.

[Edward R. Murrow:] I think there is another aspect of this, Mr. Drummond. I think it was Senator [George] Smathers who said that Castro had made a major propaganda blunder in this area. I think the

Senator was right. Because basically what he did was to do, as Mrs. Roosevelt pointed out, what Hitler did when he offered to trade Jews for trucks. This parallel was drawn all around the world, not only in Latin America, but in Western Europe as well. The indication that the tactics of communism and of fascism are basically the same--

[ER:] We always know they are the same. We see it always--

[Edward R. Murrow:] But I think the reaction to the committee on which Mrs. Roosevelt serves has by and large in the free world been that this is one of the most unsordid acts that this country has undertaken-

[Roscoe Drummond:] In other words, we're winning both ways, in a sense?

[Edward R. Murrow:] We are winning--

[Roscoe Drummond:] It's a bad proposal and a good reaction--a good response.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] I think one of the tests of this, Roscoe, is the fact that up to this point the Soviet radio and the East German radio and so on have made no--I think there's one mention in one East German broadcast-- [Edward R. Murrow: That's right--] Apart from that, in the whole Soviet bloc, they've had -- they've done nothing with the Castro offer. They obviously regard it with great embarrassment and see how it is something which is--

[ER:] Do you think it has a good or bad impress --

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Yes, no I think I'd like to strike a discordant note on this. I hasten to say, Mrs. Roosevelt, I think your committee and its work are entirely and imminently creditable, but I think that to compare this with the Eichmann trading the Jews is entirely wrong and does much more credit to Eichman. I think that was entirely, an entirely different and a much more bestial sort of offer. And if I might say so, [Chanchal Sarkar addresses Edward R. Murrow directly] You say it's a mistake in-in-in terms of propaganda. But I think it's also a rather smart and astute move because -- I don't know -- I don't imagine that Castro would have shot these people, as he has done, surely the people of his own country, and that I just can't imagine that uh-that with the reaction in world opinion that would have produced that either you give these tractors or we shoot them. I don't think he would have done it. And I think--

[ER:] No, he stated, I have to be truthful, quickly. He stated that he -- they would go to hard labor for thirty or thirty-five years, but they would not be shot.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] And even that, you see, after all, these people were invaders. In terms of international law he could have tried them, and this, in a sense, is a smart move. You might think that it's-it's very despicable. But you know in countries like India and elsewhere where Cuba is very a remote and small island, there is an instinctive sympathy for revolutionary leaders, bearded or otherwise [laughter]. And I think that that still survives with a huge country like the United States leaning over it. And I think that this reaction of Eichmann equating him to Eichmann was completely wrong. And it's ironical.

[ER:] I would have to say that at the beginning, there was sympathy here in the revolution, but it has changed as time has gone on--

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Of course. Of course, yes, yes.

[Edward R. Murrow:] But whether the Eichmann parallel was right or wrong, accurate or inaccurate, in a situation like this you always have at least two alternatives and have regard for what the reaction would have been had American citizens remained mute, said nothing and done nothing. [Chanchal Sarkar: No. I think --] Then the world reaction would have been, [Chanchal Sarkar: Yes, yes, oh yes.], "There are the Americans, they are more concerned with their money and their machinery than they are with the liberty of men," after all we helped put them on those beaches. The fact that it took a lot of four o'clock in the morning courage to go there has rather been lost sight of. And I think had we remained mute and done nothing then the reaction would have been worse.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Oh, I'm sure, as I said, I entirely agree with the committee--

[Roscoe Drummond:] Surely these lives are genuinely on our conscience, and their safety.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Well, it's an ironical atonement, isn't it, as you were saying. The government disassociated itself publicly from the operation, and the government is disassociating itself publicly from the actual work of the committee in the sense that President Kennedy is operating as an individual. So it's, in some ways, it is an ironical atonement, if I might say so.

[Roscoe Drummond:] I'd like to suggest we turn our discussion to perhaps what's the main theme of the afternoon or the evening. And that is in the world we're living in today, what are the propaganda resources and capabilities of the American government and the American people? I'd like to raise one point, and I think we might all look at our resources and capabilities. If I'm correctly informed, and it seems to me I'm recalling something you said the other day, Mr. Murrow, Red China is broadcasting to the Western Hemisphere than the United States is broadcasting to the Western Hemisphere. And the Soviet Union is investing more money in trying to prevent people from hearing the Voice of America than the USIA is investing in its entire worldwide program utilizing at least seven media. Now is that adequate? I mean, and if not, what is adequate and what should we do about it?

[Edward R. Murrow:] Well, I think one thing should be said at the outset, and that is that the impact of American society and policy abroad is by no means confined to the Voice of America or to the books we publish or the movies we--

[Roscoe Drummond:] But that would be true about the other societies too, perhaps.

[Edward R. Murrow:] It is also true that we have, for example, thirty thousand missionaries abroad, our armed forces, what is said in a speech by a senator, the price of wheat on a big board in Chicago, the tariff that we put on textiles, all have a great influence and impact uh-uh abroad. The things that we do in the field of television, radio, publications, movies represent a very small segment of the total impact of the United States abroad. It is quite true, as you say, that in terms of kilowatts we are outgunned. We are outpublished in terms of books. The Russians, for example, last year in non-bloc languages moved from thirty to forty million books published in a single year. (28:28)

[Roscoe Drummond:] What did we do?

[Edward R. Murrow:] This is an implacable, long-range competition. It is also true, Mr. Drummond, that our budget represents just about the cost of one combat loaded Polaris submarine. Equally true that our budget would run for 400 years if we had the same amount of money that is appropriated to the Defense Department for a single year. It may be that we have our priorities somewhat wrong in this area. We are dealing, as I say, not only with communications in the various media, but the sum total of the American effort abroad; I mean, people who are hungry are not very much interested in freedom, democracy, human

dignity. So it has to be a combined effort over the whole spectrum, it seems to me. Is that not right, Arthur?

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Yes, absolutely. And I think as I said in my opening remarks that the ultimate force of our-of our effort in setting forth our values and our views to the world lies in the power of those values themselves, and this derives from our behavior as a national community. I mean, Ed Murrow can't deceive the world into thinking that we are different from the way we show ourselves as being in the life we live every day. What we can do is to give him the material with which to work, so that it's not only a matter of establishing an adequate machinery to convey an impression of the United States to the world. It's also--and that's Ed Murrow's job --but it's also making sure that the impression made by the American community is one which is going to convince and uh attract people in other lands. And that's a matter for all the rest of us.

[ER:] It's a matter also for our uh medium of communications in this country, because it has to be communicated from across the country that this responsibility is the responsibility of every individual. And I'm not sure that we always bring this home to people.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] There are many things that can be done in our everyday lives. I heard the president say the other day, for example, that in so many communities through the land there--there are students from foreign countries. I wonder how many families in these communities have understood the importance in their own lives, and indeed from the point of view of the country as a whole, of bringing -- inviting foreign students into their houses and showing them what American families are like--what American hospitality is. I know many people in many countries--in many cities have done this. I know many committees have been established, but, I think, this is the kind of personal responsibility, which the president believes rests on every one of us, and the sort of way we can contribute in our personal actions uh to-to helping of Ed Murrow do his job.

[Roscoe Drummond:] I don't want to leave entirely, though, the idea of whether or not we are doing enough and doing well-enough in our whole information program. Now I gather, for example, we -- well, we know that we are second in space, but Mr. Murrow, we're not second in broadcasting, am I right?

[Edward R. Murrow:] We are fourth--

[Roscoe Drummond:] We're fourth. The Soviet Union leads, Red China is second, who's going to name the third? Egypt? [some unclear crosstalk] Or the United Arab Republic is doing more worldwide broadcasting in the appropriate languages than the United States, and I just wonder if we are doing enough?

[Edward R. Murrow:] That is quite true. We have had practically no increase in our transmitter output since 1953. We do now have a huge transmitter complex building in Greenville, N.C. We have a relay station in the process of construction in Liberia. This requires: One, time to acquire the real estate abroad. Two, time to construct the transmitters. We are late. There is no question about this, but the picture is not all dark. For example, in Latin America, we will have about sixteen hours a week of radio placed on local medium-wave stations. We have a weekly television newsreel that appears in fifteen countries of Latin America with an estimated audience of ten million. You are quite right, Mr. Drummond, we are not as well-positioned as we should be. We have asked this year for the amount of money we think we can spend effectively and efficiently. We are working now on long-range plans and so far as the future is concerned, I quote friends that I used to have in Brooklyn, "Wait till next year" when it comes to our request for funds to do this job adequately.

[ER:] That's an interesting bit of information, but don't you have some difficulty in finding people to do the broadcasting in the languages?

[Edward R. Murrow:] We do indeed. They are not to be had, particularly in some of the exotic languages in this country. We must bring them here --

[Roscoe Drummond:] You mean like English?

[Edward R. Murrow:] I beg your pardon?

[Roscoe Drummond:] Like English? [Audience and guests laugh]

[Chanchal Sarkar:] But before we go off this point, may I make one-one-one point, and that is that I think, I'm not a communications expert, but I think it's a great pity that the USIA is responsible for projecting, shall I say, America abroad, but there's no comparable agency to make greater understanding in America. This point you were making, Mrs. Roosevelt, of the countries abroad. Because I think that any communications effort will fail unless the-the image which it is projecting abroad also understands the country to which it is being projected. I think it's a great--I think this is one area in which no effort is being made. Even the Russians, I think, don't -- despite their tremendous resources, haven't done this.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Particularly, the Russians haven't done this.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Yes, yes, and you see this is very interesting because if you-if you project anything abroad that is suspicion in governments, they don't let you go beyond a certain amount. But if you say, "Look, we're doing this, and we also allow you, and will you help us to let your country be known among our people," then you are likely to have much better rapport and much greater willingness of these countries.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Obviously, but the last thing the Soviet Union wants is to give the Russian people a faithful and accurate picture of what the outside world is like.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Ah true. But you, I hope, do.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] We do, we do.

[ER:] But I don't think we do very much about giving opportunities to people uh to do it on a broad scale. We are doing it a little with bringing people over here, the State Department--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Oh, we do a good deal of this, Mrs. Roosevelt, don't you think? In the way of exchange of persons and so on?

[ER:] Oh, exchange of persons, but this must be done, as I understand your idea, through all our communications media, of bringing people purposely here to tell about their countries so that our country will become educated in the world, in the understanding of the world. Now I don't know how you feel about this, but you go around the country a great deal. You must come across some strange concepts occasionally of what the world is like outside of the United States.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] I do encounter those. On the other hand, I also come upon a great deal of an astonishing amount of--

[ER:] Of curiosity--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Of knowledge and of sympathy. I think that this is the job that Mr. Sarkar speaks of as an important job. It's not one that-that the government can do very much of--

[ER:] But our media could--

[Roscoe Drummond:] Arthur, the government is precluded by law from doing most of this because--

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Yes, this particular agency is--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] The government can do something in the way of exchange of persons.

[Roscoe Drummond:] The USIA is not authorized or permitted to undertake any domestic program, and there's no arm or agency of the American government that is empowered to propagandize the American people or to inform them about foreign countries, unless it is done by speeches--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Well, it is done under the Cultural Relations Division of the State Department-- does bring people in from abroad.

[Roscoe Drummond:] In fact, this I suspect, Mr. Murrow is going to amiably attack me and say that this is the prime duty of the free media of communication in the United States--

[Edward R. Murrow:] Absolutely.

[ER:] That's what I was going to say.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Absolutely.

[Roscoe Drummond:] And if we don't do it, we are not serving our nation.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] You've taken all our speeches away from us.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Well, I recognize it--

[Edward R. Murrow:] No, I was not going to -- no, I was not going to attack you, Mr. Drummond, but I was going to point out that one of the difficulties in the USIA is that: One, everything we do is for export. Two, most of it is invisible. Three, we generally get in the public prints only when we get in trouble. But to revert to your uh-uh earlier point, I do not think there should be any government agency with the mission of propagandizing people in this country.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Absolutely.

[Edward R. Murrow:] But going back to what Mr. Sarkar said, I think it is important, and I refer again to the word dignity at the beginning, that we should demonstrate more curiosity. We translate books into Hindi, and we distribute them over India. Books are not translated from Hindi into English. [Chanchal Sarkar: Right.] This should be done because you have an older culture than ours and a contribution to make about which we are not sufficiently curious.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] I think it's also plain common sense. For instance, if you go abroad and you talk to, say an African, and you are only willing to tell him about Africa you find that he wants to know how he thought of in America. And what's your answer then? To say there's a tremendous amount of

misconception and ignorance, maybe sympathy, but sympathy isn't enough. I think you've got to go beyond sympathy, and this, I think, can't succeed in this--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Well, I think enormous progress has been made in this. I think that the American public in the main is far better informed about the outside world than it was twenty years old, far better informed than it was ten years ago. I think knowledge is increasing. I think that the press and radio and television have done not as good a job as they could do but not a bad job in doing this. I think that the number of people from abroad on all levels from students to editors and professors who have come into this country as well as Americans who go abroad increase this. I think the process ought to be pushed, but I think it's primarily one for the private agencies of our society.

[ER:] I think it's private agencies. But I must be honest and say that I don't think enough is being done. One of the agencies that tries to do this, of course, is the American Association for the United Nations, which I happened to have worked with. And that's one reason why I said that I thought we'd really hardly scraped the surface of telling our people about other countries in the world. Because I go out a great deal to lecture and also for the American Association to talk with people and you're talking about the United Nations, which works with all the other countries of the world. So you naturally talk about what's happening in the other countries of the world, and I am astonished sometimes at how remote it seems to a great many people instead of how close it is as you feel it when you sit in the United Nations in New York and see the representatives of those countries and realize how much you need to learn about their country, how much you would like to know that you don't know. And if you don't know it, there probably are a great many other people who know a good deal less as you move through the country.

[Edward R. Murrow:] One of our difficulties, Mrs. Roosevelt, surely is that we may sit with people from Africa or from Asia at the United Nations or in other international conferences, but we cannot sit with them in restaurants. Ambassadors from Africa in Washington cannot find a place to live and have difficulty in finding a place for their children to go to school. They are denied access to the beaches. Unless and until we can demonstrate in this country a broadening and abiding concern for equality and justice under the law, we are not going to be able to convince people abroad that we in this country are by example doing what we are urging them to do. I think it is as simple as that.

[ER:] This, this is the trouble with a free society. Because you can't force people to tell things that they don't want to tell or that are unwelcome. If the Soviet Union decided that their people should be taught that this was doing them harm, they could teach their people overnight because it's a closed society where you give out what you want your people to know and that's all--and that's it, you must do it. With us, we could say a great many of these things, but I can count, I think, on the fingers of one hand what publicity they would get in the papers of the South, for instance, or other parts of the country. And I think this is--this is one of our serious difficulties here. The getting to the people of the country the need to understand the world, which uh in a way, we are a little bit um hoping to influence.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Do you find, Mr. Murrow, that our own honest shortcomings as a free society greatly hurt the credibility of your information program around the world?

[Edward R. Murrow:] I think I may be a minority in this, uh but I do not believe that we are severely damaged by telling the truth. One, we could not conceal it if we tried to do so. Two, I think we create the impression that in this country we recognize that democracy's business is always unfinished business and that to people who are searching around for new allegiances, who are shopping about for ideas, the demonstration that we are not perfect, but that we are making the effort is, I think, effective. Uh I don't believe that we can ever be effective in concealment. I think our example in this country may be much more important than the expenditure of our dollars abroad.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Including our space shots which are--

[Edward R. Murrow:] Yes.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Yes, Mr. Sarkar--

[Chanchal Sarkar:] I think Mr. Drummond was, if I understood you right, that he was making another point, and that is to say, the contradictions in the free society, do they make credibility abroad more difficult? And that it does. For instance, you have a lot of social security in this country. But if you mention the word-- America being socialist, or if any American says that he likes--or an American leader like Lyndon Johnson goes to India and says that our objectives are the same, then people are aghast, say that this is not socialism. Now here in this country you expect, you don't expect people to distinguish between socialism and communism, they can't. But abroad, you expect people to distinguish between the South's attitude to-to color, racial questions and the North's. You know, people abroad don't--find it very difficult to draw this distinction. So there are a great deal of things within the framework in the-the United States, which-which are very difficult for people to understand.

[Edward R. Murrow:] I think that this is one of our difficulties, and I would be interested if Mrs. Roosevelt agrees--that there are emerging nations to which we have acted as midwife and fairy godmother. We have financed them without stint. We expect them to imitate us in all details of their economic and social structure. They aren't going to. They can't. They haven't the capital. They haven't the education. And in most cases, they want to hammer out their own destiny, as we did. And to expect them to imitate us is futile.

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] I don't know who "we" is, Ed, in this context because I do think there has been, in recent months, a marked change in the policy of the government on these questions.

[Edward R. Murrow:] [Murrow laughing] I was--by "we," I meant many people in this country. I was not speaking for the administration. I forgot myself--thank you. [Guests and audience laugh]

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] Because I think-I think one of the things, the points about the new aid program is that it does precisely that, in the sense that it does recognize that countries are going to, particularly new countries, are going to try to establish their social and economic identity in their own way, and according to their own needs and the genius of their own institutions. And neutralism, which once was regarded as a mortal sin, is now regarded as a phase which any nation, including the United States when we were an emergent nation, went through. And as for the question of socialism and communism, I do hope, Mr. Sarkar, that one thing the Americans are increasingly understanding is that there is a vast difference between the social democratic tradition, which exists in the framework of the belief in individual rights and due process of law, a vast difference between the social- socialist tradition and the communist tradition. I would think that the United States does not wish to remake the world in its image. But it does -- on the other hand it does not -- it is not going to stand by and watch any other nation try to remake the world in its image. What we're looking for is a pluralistic world where nations can achieve their own identities in their own ways within a commonly accepted framework of ground rules, which allow nations to dwell together in peace.

[Roscoe Drummond:] You might be able to put one aspect of it and say that we do not insist on imposing the same liberal economy that we have in the United States upon other countries if they don't want it. They can have their own economy, and that our main concern is to encourage the choice to be governed by their own consent. [Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.: Absolutely.] And create a society that is natural to their convictions and their environment.

[ER:] Yes, but I think perhaps one of the things we need to have understood in this country is that it isn't an economy that we fight in communism. I think that's one of the things we need to understand at home in order to have it understood abroad. Because, uh as far as I know, in the Soviet Union, they're still fighting capitalism as Marx defined it, and we don't have that kind of capitalism in this country anymore. It is enormously changed. And - but you will find many people here at home who say you cannot have democracy unless you have capitalism. Now this is nonsense, and it doesn't -- it isn't true here in this country now because our capitalism is a controlled type of capitalism. We have done very well on an entire uh plane of earning money uh because we had great natural resources, on a private enterprise basis. But we do lots of things which are socialist things even in this country, and we certainly have never objected to Norway and Sweden's mixed economy. We're certainly not going to object if India and Africa have to have mixed economies, but many of our people don't understand the difference. That we really have a difference in ideals between democracy and communism. The individual is important to us.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Do any of you want to add--

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Yes, I am interested that you raised this point about neutralism because it comes at a very odd and ironical moment. Because just at this time, I think, it's necessary for countries like India and others to be pragmatic about neutralism, in the sense that at the time that Mr. Dulles was so strongly against neutralism there was a situation in which we could have been very much irritated. But supposing I put the point to you this way: That over the last few years, India, if it looks back, will probably find that the military presence of the United States in Southeast Asia has probably been a check on Chinese or other countries infiltrating or coming into India. Similarly, the United States, I hope has benefited by India and other countries' desire to be neutral, whatever you say the word means, by saying that you just can't expect us to see things your way. But ironically, the diplomatic objective of the United States today is to try and persuade uh countries like India, Japan, and Burma, not to be absolutely hermetically sealed off neutral. And try and realize the difficulties and dangers of infiltration and shed some of their neutrality. So that any-any policy which you put forward to these countries has to be tailored to this kind of objective, as well as realizing on your own part that you can't say certain things or do certain things in black and white--things for us to accept, and say we want to defend.

[Edward R. Murrow:] But arising out of what you said, it seems to me, there is one, there are many hopeful signs. But one at least, and that is in the Congo, where it has been demonstrated that neutralism is not only valuable, but in this case almost indispensable. Because had all the powers been welded to one bloc or another then collision would have been inevitable. [unknown speaker: Yes.] As it is, the Indians sending two brigades of troops to the [Chanchal Sarkar: To the Congo. Yes.] Congo, this, a few years ago, would have been an astonishing development. Had there been no neutrals then the collision would have occurred.

[ER:] Yes, that's very true.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Before we have to give very brief answers to questions as time moves on, I'd like to raise a matter which you all might want to comment on. Uh we have said -- we appear to be substantially in agreement that good information, and in a sense, good propaganda, can only rest on and stem from good national policy. And yet I think that most -- surely most people believe, and perhaps we all here think, that uh Khrushchev is a skilled and brilliant and effective propagandist. If both of these premises are true, does this mean that Khrushchev's effectiveness as a propagandist stems from the validity and constructiveness of Soviet policy, or he -- is he an exception to the rule, who is able to achieve effective propaganda based on bad policy?

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.]: I think there's a great difference, Mr. Drummond, in that, in the question of the relationship of propaganda to an open society and propaganda to a closed society. And the remarks

arguing that propaganda, information policy to be effective in an open society must faithfully portray that society are perfectly -- the reason for that is perfectly obvious because other people can go and check on what we're saying and credibility would be destroyed. But in a closed society, like the Soviet society, it's extremely hard for the rest of the world to know whether Khrushchev's picture of a paradise for the peasants and workers is true or not, and that gives him a great technical advantage in this field of propaganda. But it's not an advantage we would wish to emulate because the whole point of this conflict is that between an open and closed society.

[Roscoe Drummond:] I didn't mean emulation, you understand--

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.:] And therefore, I think, this is just one of the difficulties with which we have to cope. But since the only way we could match Khrushchev's advantage is to destroy our own freedom. And since the issue between the Russians, the Communists, and ourselves is this question of freedom, therefore it's just an inherent difficulty in the game.

[Edward R. Murrow:] There is also the matter of relative simplicity because Khrushchev's propaganda is operating, particularly in the emerging countries, against a great explosion of expectancy. They are in a hurry. He offers them a simple method of operation at the sacrifice of their personal liberties and without any protection of law.

[ER:] But he doesn't tell them that--

[Edward R. Murrow:] He doesn't tell them that. Our system is complex. Ours is not a system where the individual can abdicate his responsibility for making difficult decisions.

[Roscoe Drummond:] And more gradual.

[Edward R. Murrow:] And more gradual. And so this is one area where he has an advantage. He has another as well, and that is, and I think Mr. Sarkar would agree, that if you talk with people in Africa and in Asia about the new type of Russian colonialism, they will say to you, but the only colonialism with which [Chanchal Sarkar: We know.] we have experience is Western colonialism--

[Chanchal Sarkar:] Or classical colonialism, yes--

[Edward R. Murrow:] And it's the most difficult thing in the world to substitute intelligence for experience, [Chanchal Sarkar: Yes, correct..] and they have no experience with the Russian type of colonialism. They don't recognize it.

[Chanchal Sarkar:] In any case, we have different expectations in propaganda from Russia and America. It's a much more complicated job to project an open society. We know that Russian society is monolithic, but we don't expect this from--and the worst thing you could do is to try and emulate Russian methods and Russian--

[Edward R. Murrow:] This is the danger. I think one of the most potent quotations I remember was one that Hitler made in 1933 in Königsberg before he came to power when he said in effect, "The great strength of the totalitarian state is that it will force those who fear it to imitate it." That is the thing that we cannot do.

[ER:] That, of course, is one of the important things to remember because that is one of the things that I think is the danger here. We see people trying to emulate and it's either the fascist or the communist. It's important that we prevent it if we possibly can.

[Edward R. Murrow:] I think in that area, we have failed to put enough emphasis on one of the basic differences between the totalitarian system and ours, and that is law. That no one can come through that door without a search warrant. The right to strike. That the law is the thing that protects the individual from the tyranny of the state and from encroachment by his neighbors. This is the essential differences, one of them at least.

[Roscoe Drummond:] Who would like to give a thirty second answer to this question, and that is: "During the last year or so, Mr. Khrushchev on one hundred and thirty different occasions has threatened to rain nuclear weapons and nuclear rockets on twenty different countries. But that hasn't uh that hasn't smeared the image of the Soviet Union appreciably, or certainly not in a measure comparable to the gravity of the threat. How does he get away with it?"

[Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.]: The world expects, or a large number of people in the world expect, the Soviet Union to be ruthless. The standards the Soviet Union has set for itself are those which make it easy for such remarks to be absorbed. But for countries, the Western countries, who have insisted on a certain standard of international behavior, for us to deviate from that standard is much worse. Again this is one of the inherent difficulties of being a free and open and decent society as against being a totalitarian society.

[ER:] I hate to bring this to an end. I'm sorry, but I must say my thanks to all of you, Mr. Schlesinger, Mr. Murrow, Mr. Sarkar, and Mr. Drummond. You have been more than kind. And now, I think I'd like to just say that out of this comes, to me, a great sense of responsibility for the individual. We cannot do good propaganda unless we have something good on which to base it. Now until next Autumn, I want to say *au revoir* and hope that all of you will be back with us at the next show -- at the next show we have which I hope will be in September.

[Audience applause]

[Theme music begins 57:40]

[Credit sequence overlaid on *Prospects of Mankind* logo]

[Bob Jones:] [speaking while names appear on credit sequence] Edward R. Murrow is the director of the United States Information Agency, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. is special assistant to President Kennedy, Chanchal Sarkar is the assistant editor of the Indian newspaper, *The Statesman*, Roscoe Drummond is Washington columnist at the *New York Herald Tribune* syndicate. The executive producer of *Prospects of Mankind* is Henry Morgenthau, III, producer-director, Paul Noble, producer-writer, Diana Tead Michaelis.

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[National Educational Television logo]

[Bob Jones:] This is NET. National Educational Television.

[Theme music ends 59:06]

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